

Amendments to the Claims:

Following is a complete listing of the claims pending in the application, as amended:

Claims 1-17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended) A method for ~~treating hepatitis C virus (HCV)~~
decreasing the alanine aminotransferase (ALT) blood level in a human subject,
comprising

orally administering interferon-tau to the subject at a daily dosage between 2 x
 $10^8 - 10^{10}$ Units, said dosage effective to decrease ~~stimulate~~ bloodstream levels of ~~2',~~
~~5' oligoadenylate synthetase~~ ALT relative to bloodstream levels of ~~2', 5' oligoadenylate~~
~~synthetase~~ ALT prior to treatment, and
~~continuing to orally administer interferon-tau to the subject in such effective~~
~~amount until improvement of the subject's condition is observed.~~

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18, wherein said orally
administering comprises orally administering interferon-tau formulated to avoid
absorption through the *tunica mucosa oris*.

20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19, wherein said orally
administering comprises orally administering interferon-tau contained in an oral-
delivery vehicle effective to release the interferon-tau in active form in the digestive
tract.

21. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19, wherein said orally
administering comprises orally administering interferon-tau contained in an oral-
delivery vehicle effective to release interferon-tau in the stomach or intestines.

22. (Currently amended) The method of claim 18, wherein said orally administering comprises orally administering interferon-tau at a dose ~~between 10^8 — 10^{10}~~ greater than 4×10^8 Units per day.

23. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18, further comprising administering a second anti-viral agent to the subject.

24. (Currently amended) The method of claim 18, further comprising measuring the blood level of ~~2', 5'-oligoadenylate synthetase~~ ALT in the subject prior to orally administering interferon-tau.

25. (Currently amended) The method of claim 18, further comprising measuring the blood level of ~~2', 5'-oligoadenylate synthetase~~ ALT in the subject after orally administering interferon-tau.

26. (Currently amended) The method of claim 25, further comprising adjusting the dose of interferon-tau and continuing to administer at said adjusted dose.